

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT:

This report pertains to an investigation of the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921.

SUBMITTED TO:

[CWGC Canadian Agency](#)

66 Slater Street

Suite 1707

Ottawa Ontario Canada K1A 0P4

Att: [Dominique Boulais](#)

Report Date: 12 December 2016

Reason for Submission: ("X" means purpose of the report)

Casualty Identification:		Burial Information:	
Confirmed Identity	X	Burial Location Identified	X
Most Probable Identity		Grave Stone Correction	
Questionable Identity		Grave Records Correction	X
Incorrect Identity		Request for CWGC Details	
Other		Other	

Supporting Documents: (# refers to attachment number; "I" information provided)

Casualty Identification:		Burial Information:	
Coppell, Edward	i	Feuchy Chapel Br. Cem.	link
28 th Infantry Battalion	i	Wancourt, France	i
Lance Corporal 440446	i	Plot 1 Row G Grave 2	i
Date of Death 26-08-1918	link	Date of Burial 26-08-1918	i
Attestation Papers	link	Cemetery Schematic	link
Service Record	link	Graves Registration Report	8
Circumstance of Death	1	Concentration of Grave	
CEF Canada Register	2	Headstone Register	
War Diary Extract(s)	3	Casualty Spreadsheet	
Area Map(s)	4	Trench Map Exhumation	
Trench Map(s)	5	Grave Stone Photograph	
Possible Candidates List	6	Grave Stone Inscription	
Excluded Candidate	7	Reporting and Review	9

Summary of Findings:

The Graves Registration Report form for Plot 1 Row G Grave 2 at the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery, Wancourt lists an Unknown Lance Corporal of the 28th Canadian Infantry Battalion.

A review of all of the information for this case shows that only three (3) Lance Corporals of the 28th Battalion were lost in action in August 1918, two (2) of which were UNKNOWN. One has a known burial location and two are on the Vimy Memorial. Only Lance Corporal Coppell had a direct burial in the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery. The other was exhumed from a battlefield grave at a later date.

Details of Findings:

The findings are conclusive that the remains in Plot 1 Row G Grave 2 at the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery are those of Lance Corporal Edward Coppel #440466 of the 28th Canadian Infantry Battalion.

The findings are based on the following:

1. The *Circumstance of Death* record for Lance Corporal Coppel note that he was killed in action at about 2 pm on August 26, 1918 during an attack and shortly after leaving the “jumping off” position, he was shot through the heart by shrapnel and killed (Attachment #1). It is reported that the unit was south of Wancourt at that time. There was no record of burial reported.
2. The *E-13 War Graves Register* for Lance Corporal Coppel reports that as of 15 April 1920 there was no information as to his burial location and thus his name was to be inscribed on the Vimy Memorial (Attachment #2).
3. The 28th *Battalion War Diary* pinpoints the location of the 28th Infantry Battalion on the 26th and 27th of August 1918 (Attachment #3). The battalion was moving southward through sector **51b.N.22**, which places it on the west side of Wancourt. Scattered shelling was reported at this time. From that point onward, they moved south and then southeast toward Cherisy.
4. An *Area Map* from Nicholson’s Official History of the Canadian Army during the Battle of Arras depicts the general movement of the 28th Infantry Battalion through the area from north of Neuville-Vitasse, southwest of Wancourt and on to Cherisy (Attachment #4). The area covered by the 28th Battalion is circled in blue.
5. A period *Trench Map* of the area provides additional detail on the grid references for the movement of the battalion during the advance from the 25th to 27th of August 1918 (Attachment #5). By late evening on the 26th the unit was more-or-less in a line south of the Wancourt Tower, facing east toward Cherisy. They had passed south of Wancourt.
6. The *CWGC Casualty Database* tells us that for the complete month of August 1918 there were only three (3) Lance Corporals of the 28th Canadian Infantry Battalion killed in action (Attachment #6). Lance Corporal Harry James Murphy was lost on 10 August 1918 and is known to be buried in the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery. Lance Corporals Fred Earl #441377 and Edward Coppel #440466 were not knowingly identified after the battle, thus both their names are inscribed on the Vimy Memorial.

In order to make sure that all Lance Corporals were accounted for at this specific time, we checked the CWGC database for any Lance Corporal of any Canadian unit that was on the Vimy Memorial from 20 August 1918 to 26 August 1918. Only the same two Lance Corporals appear on the resulting list. Sadly another 12 were lost by the end of the month.

7. The *Circumstance of Death* record for Lance Corporal Fred Earl #441377 reveals that he was killed in action during an advance on enemy positions in the vicinity of Heninel (Attachment #7). The mapping previously referenced tells us that this is a location to the southwest of Wancourt on the Cojeul River, close to the furthest advance the evening of 26-27 August 1918.

The most important aspect of Lance Corporal Earls, record is that it tells us that he had a known battlefield grave at approximately **51b.N.35.a.50.95** which places him to the southeast of Heninel. In order for his remains to have appeared in the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery we thus know that his remains would have had to have been exhumed from this location, which would then have been recorded.

8. The *Graves Registration Report Form* (GRRF) for Plot 1 Row G at the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery tells us that a Lance Corporal of the 28th Battalion was placed in Grave 2. We know that the actual date recorded in that document is off by one day, as both the Lance Corporals were reported dead on 26 August 1918. This is a common occurrence on many of the records where the death occurred in the late evening or early morning hours. It is not a critical issue in this case as we know that only two Lance Corporals are recorded dead and both with the same date.

The important point for the GRRF record is that the burial is in Plot 1 of the cemetery and consultation of the CWGC records tells us the following:

The cemetery was begun by the VI Corps Burial Officer in May 1917, used at intervals until March 1918, and again in August and September 1918. At the Armistice, it contained 249 graves, all in the present Plot I. It was then enlarged when 834 graves (mainly of April and May 1917) were brought in from the battlefields of Fampoux, Roeux, Monchy and Wancourt, and from a few smaller burial grounds ... (details excluded).

As we have noted in Section 7, the body of Lance Corporal Earl would have had to have been exhumed after the Armistice in order for it to have appeared in the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery. If that had happened, the burial could not have been in Plot 1. Concentrations of Graves did not occur until the start of Plot 2. That conclusively eliminates the only other candidate from the 28th Infantry Battalion that could have been in Grave 1.G.2.

Although not detailed in this report, an investigation as to the whereabouts of many of the men lost in the battle in Sector **51b.N35** has revealed they were buried in the Wancourt British Cemetery; the more logical alternative for concentrated graves moved after the Armistice. An example of these is shown on [CWGC Record 2061972](#), specific to men of the 28th Canadian Infantry Battalion. If located, the remains might have also been marked as found in the bordering section **51b.N.29**, as Earl was lost on the border of these two sectors **51b.N35.a** and **51b.N.29.c**.

Action Required:

The "Investigative Report" has been prepared in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out by the CWGC, should they wish to make any changes to the commemoration details (Attachment #9).

The evidence provides clear proof that the only remains that can be in Plot 1 Row G Grave 2 of the Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery are those of Lance Corporal Edward Coppel.

ATTACHMENT #1

Ancestry.com. *Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914-1948* [[database on-line](#)]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: [War Graves Registry: Circumstances of Death Records](#). Record Group 150, 1992-1993/314, Boxes 145-238. Library and Archives Canada. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. War Graves Ledger Books. RG 150, 1992-93/314, vols. 239-302. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAMES
440466	Lance Corporal	COPELL	Edward
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. RELIGION
28th Battalion	26-8-18	649-C-4290	Church of England
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
<p>"Killed in Action"</p> <p>About 2 P.M. on August 26th 1918, during an attack and shortly after leaving the "jumping off" position, he was shot through the heart by shrapnel and killed.</p>			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
SOUTH OF WANCOURT.			
NOTE:—Boxes 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE
		Grave	
		Plot	
		Row	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED TO	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

ATTACHMENT #2

Ancestry.com. Canada, CEF Commonwealth War Graves Registers, 1914-1919 [[database on-line](#)].
 Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: [War Graves Registry: Circumstances of Death Records](#); (RG150, 1992-1993/314, Boxes 39-144); Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

Form E. 13
 1897 6m. 21/518 D. 262

Reg. No. 440466 Rank I/Cpl. Name COPPELL, E. 649. C-4290. File No. R.L. 9777

Unit 28th Battn. (Sask. Regt.)

Date of Casualty	Nature and Place of Casualty	Next-of-Kin
26-8-18.	Killed in Action.	
Published on D.C.L.		
No. A.311		
Date 6-9-18.		

Unconfirmed Burial Report	Grave No.	Authority	Report of Circumstances of Casualty	
No information as at 15-4-20. VIMY MEMORIAL			Received from Unit	Forwarded
			Date 10-9-18	Ottawa 23-10-18
			Written For	A.A.G. Written
			Date	Date
Confirmed Burial Report	Grave No.	Authority	Burial Report Advised to Ottawa and Next-of-Kin	

ATTACHMENT #3

Library and Archives Canada: War Diaries of the First World War. Available as (1) [ArchivaNet: On-Line Research Tool](#), or (2) [War Diaries of the First World War](#).

2

(2) **THE ATTACK:** (Continued)

encountered, which was rapidly and easily overcome, with the capture of about 150 prisoners, including a Staff Officer and 9 Regimental Officers, and by 9.40 A.M., the Southern Divisional Boundary had been reached - this coinciding with the Objective.

Orders previously issued for the consolidation of the GREEN LINE were accordingly acted upon. At 9.15 A.M., the BRIGADE MAJOR came up to Battalion Headquarters to confer with the Commanding Officer, when he stated that it was the intention to continue the Advance Southward towards the village of CHRELSY. The 28th Battalion was consequently stopped in its task of consolidating the GREEN LINE and reformed and made ready for further advance at 10.30 A.M. Battalion Headquarters moved forward to N.21.0.2.9, and at 11.15 A.M., the Commanding Officer visited all the Companies and conferred with Company Sergeant-Major upon the situation. At 1.30 P.M., the Staff Officer came forward to Battalion Headquarters, and gave a general outline of the proposed operation, viz: for the Brigade to advance with the 28th Battalion on the right and the 27th Battalion on the left, and occupy as a first step the Trench System running through N.30.6.2.0, N.35.6.2.0, and N.36.6.2.0. Any success gained in this operation to be exploited as far as possible. At 4.30 P.M., the Battalion again moved to the Attack, under cover of a creeping Shrapnel Barrage. The advance at the outset was brilliantly successful, and the High Ground to the East of the village of WANCOURT fell easily into our hands. On coming over the crest of the Ridge, however, the Battalion at once came under heavy Machine Gun and Artillery Fire, and were unfortunately held up along the Line of CHOW TRENCH. The enemy brought up strong reinforcements of Infantry and Artillery, and it was impossible to carry the Advance beyond this line. In the early hours of the morning of August 27th, - exploiting our successes - we occupied BERTRE TRENCH. At 10.00 A.M., August 27th, the 5th C.I.B. passed through the 6th C.I.B., and proceeded with the Advance.

(3) **CAPTURES:**

- 10 Officers and 140 Other Ranks.
- 2 T.N.'s and 25 M.G.'s. (Estimated)
- 5 Officers (wounded).
- 23 Other Ranks (Killed).
- 60 Other Ranks (Wounded).
- 10 Other Ranks (Missing).

(Signed) **LIEUT. CHANCE**, Adjutant,
28th Canadian Infantry Battalion.

12.40 A.M.
August 28th, 1918.

app
LD

A NARRATIVE OF THE OPERATIONS
Undertaken by The
28th Canadian Infantry Battalion,
August 26/27th, 1918.
-10:00:01-

(1) **ASSEMBLY:**

On August 22nd, the Battalion was at the village of CHOUY-EN-AVOIS, having arrived from the ALIENS front on the night, August 21/22nd. On the afternoon, August 23rd, the Battalion moved by lorry to 18 HAC-DU-NORD, thence by Route MARON to AGNY, relieving elements of the 8th Battalion. THE SEABORTH HIGHLANDERS, and the 4/5th Battalion. THE BLACK WATCH, in Support Positions - TELEGRAPH HILL. SWITZER SYSTEM - with Battalion Headquarters at N.7.0.6.5. Orders were received on the 27th, for an Attack upon the enemy Positions in the vicinity of HERVILLE-VITASSE, with a First Objective the village of WANCOURT. In the first instance the 28th Battalion was ordered to attack on the Right of the 6th Brigade.

Numerous slight modifications took place, however, in the original plan, until as late as 7.00 P.M., on the evening of August 25th, the role of the Battalion in the intended operation was entirely changed. Battalion Headquarters moved up to N.15.4.6.9, on the evening of August 25th, and here very hurriedly, the operation was outlined to Company Commanders. The task allotted to the Battalion was a "Hopping Up" Operation entirely. The 62nd Division on the Right attacked in a North-Easterly direction, and the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade and 27th Canadian Infantry Battalion attacked in a South-Easterly direction, both Attacks converging towards the village of WANCOURT, leaving an Area some two thousand yards square to be dealt with. This task was allotted to the 28th Battalion, and the Battalion assembled in N.17.6.2.0 and N.18.6.2.0, and b. The Assembly being completed by 2.00 A.M. Battalion Headquarters located at N.12.0.3.2. Here last instructions were given to Company Commanders.

(2) **THE ATTACK:**

Zero was 3.00 A.M. The morning dark and rainy. Shortly after Zero, the Battalion left its Assembly Positions in order: "A" Company (CAPT. H. L. SALMON, M.C.), "B" Company (CAPT. H. S. OLIVER), "C" Company (CAPT. R. V. BLACKBURN, D.S.O., M.C.), "D" Company (LIEUT. H. O. FRASER), following the attacking Battalions through the Area included by the Southern Positions of the squares N.8 and 9, until the Column rested on the GRID LINE, between N.9 and N.10. Here a Right Turn was executed, and the Battalion assembled formed up to carry out its task with "A" Company on the Left, "B" Company on the Centre, "C" Company on the Right and "D" Company in Reserve.

Battalion Headquarters moved in the interval to N.13.4.20.90. The Battalion came under somewhat heavy Shell Fire in the Forward Up Position, and here both N. V. BLACKBURN, D.S.O., M.C., and LIEUT. P. HARRADENCE, M.C., were wounded. Soon after 6.00 A.M., the Battalion could be seen moving Southward, meeting with practically no resistance except for scattered shelling in and around N.22.2.2. and N.21.4. Some slight opposition was encountered.

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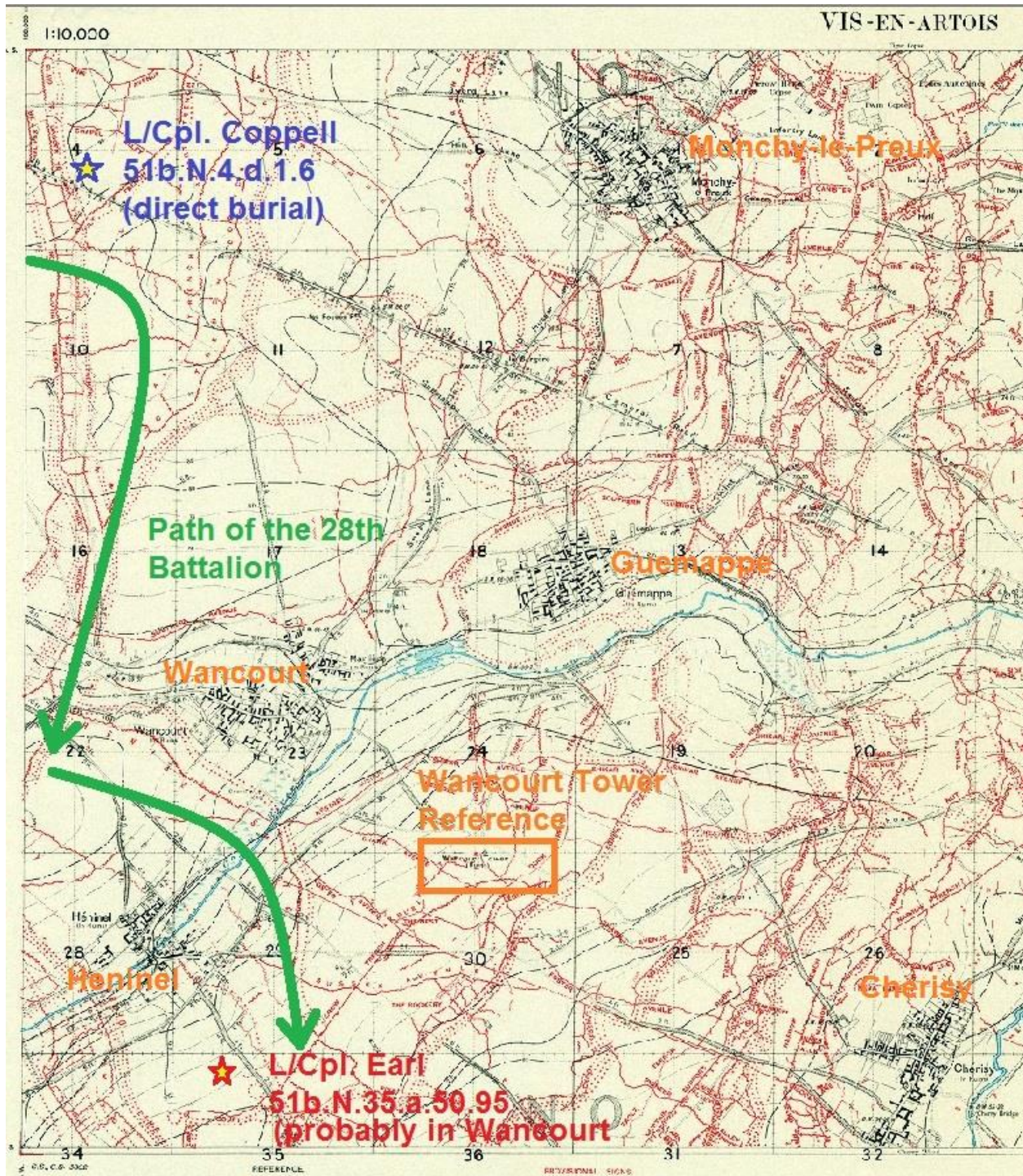
ATTACHMENT #4

Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War. Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-1919. Col. G. W. L. Nicholson. Queens Printer and Controller of Stationary. Ottawa Canada 1962. (Nicholson [Matrix Utility Digital Source](#) by the Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group).



ATTACHMENT #5

The National Archives British Trench Map Atlas .Vis-en-Artois Edition 8A Map wo297_1251
Trenches Corrected 25/04/1918. Naval and Military Press, Uckfield, West Sussex, United Kingdom.



ATTACHMENT #6

Commonwealth War Graves Commission – Find War Dead

28th Battalion Lance Corporals for month of August 1918

Surname

☒ Initials
☐ Forename

Country
(commemorated in)

Country

Cemetery or memorial

War

Please select

Date of death: (starting)

01 Aug 1918

Date of death: (ending)

31 Aug 1918

3 record(s) match your search criteria

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Service Country	Grave / Memorial Reference	Cemetery / Memorial Name	Docs.
MURPHY, HARRY JAMES	Lance Corporal	1051255	10/08/1918	32	Canadian Infantry	Canadian	III. BB. 7.	VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MILITARY CEMETERY	
EARL, FRED	Lance Corporal	441377	26/08/1918	22	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL	
COPPELL, EDWARD	Lance Corporal	440466	26/08/1918	25	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL	

Any CEF Lance Corporal on Vimy Memorial August 20-27 1918:

☒ Initials
☐ Forename

Country
(commemorated in)

France

Cemetery or memorial

Vimy Memorial

War

Please select

Date of death: (starting)

20 Aug 1918

Date of death: (ending)

26 Aug 1918

2 record(s) match your search criteria

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Service Country	Grave / Memorial Reference	Cemetery / Memorial Name	Docs.
EARL, FRED	Lance Corporal	441377	26/08/1918	22	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL	
COPPELL, EDWARD	Lance Corporal	440466	26/08/1918	25	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL	

ATTACHMENT #7

Ancestry.com. *Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914-1948* [[database on-line](#)]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: [War Graves Registry: Circumstances of Death Records](#). Record Group 150, 1992-1993/314, Boxes 145-238. Library and Archives Canada. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. War Graves Ledger Books. RG 150, 1992-93/314, vols. 239-302. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAMES
441377	Lance Corporal	EARL, (D.C.M.)	Fred
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. RELIGION
28th Battalion	26-8-18	649-E-1031	Church of England
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
<p>"Killed in Action"</p> <p>During an advance on enemy positions, in the vicinity of Heninzel, he was hit in the left shoulder by enemy fire and instantly killed, about 5 P.M. on August 26th, 1918.</p>			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
NOTE:-Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE
		Grave..... Plot..... Row.....	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED TO	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

19. REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GRAVE.
Sheet 51b.N.35.a.50.95.
20. REMARKS.

ATTACHMENT #8

Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Graves Registration Report Form.

<http://archive.cloud.cwgc.org/archive/doc/doc2000427.JPG>

GFP. COMPREHENSIVE REPORT 29.7.20 Army Form W. 3372.

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

No 1 District B/C 268

REPORT No. 1 SCHEDULE No. 18c

Commune: ~~Monchy-le-Preux~~
MONCHY-LE-PREUX

PLACE OF BURIAL FEUCHY CHAPEL BRITISH CEMETERY.

Map Reference 51.b.N.4.d.1.6.

* 27 NOV 1920

Certified complete and correct

DAD. GR & E.
"B" Branch.
No. 1
DATE Major.

The following are buried here:—

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave
PLOT 1 ROW "B" (Contd)						
2 Suffolks	40733	PIERSON ✓	Cpl W.	10.5.17	GRU	36. ✓
-do-	50640	FALKNER ✓	Pte P.	11.5.17	E	37. ✓
-do-	27185	HOATH ✓	Pte J.	11.5.17	E	38. ✓
-do-	50629	ROBINSON ✓	Pte R.	11.5.17	E	39. ✓
-do-	50606	HARRIS ✓	Pte W.	11.5.17	E	40. ✓
-do-	20208	BULLEN	Pte C.	10.5.17	E	41. ✓
-do-	18222	TAYLOR	Pte J. A.	10.5.17	E	42. ✓
-do-	50259	HOGG ✓	Pte A.	3.2.18	E	43. ✓
-do-	50634	WRIGHT ✓	Pte F.	28.4.17	E	44. ✓
PLOT 1 ROW "C"						
28 Can Eng	1069303	STUCKEY ✓	Spr GE.	29.8.18	GRU	1. ✓
28 Can Bn	---	UNKNOWN ✓	L/Cpl.	25.8.18	E	2. ✓
-do-	1069025	DENNING ✓	Pte A.E.	26.8.18	E	3. ✓
127 Bt. RFA.	119566	BRACKEN ✓	Bm A.	29.8.18	GRU	4. ✓
-do-	95166	WILSON ✓	Gn P.	-do-	"	5. ✓

41 31 5) W1163-P133 45,000 10/17 HWV(P117) Forms/W3372/2
144-908 70,000 4/18

CHECKED 8.16.20 m. 7.3.21.

ATTACHMENT #9

This “*Reporting and Review*” attachment is provided to assist all parties in the submission of an investigative report related to the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) receives a copy of this report in the event they wish to make changes to the commemoration details. In order to alter the records, the CWGC has set out their criteria for the procedure and submission of cases for review, as detailed below. The CWGC is under no obligation to make changes based on a report.

Procedure:	Guideline Criteria for Submission:
All new identification cases need to be assessed in the first instance by the Canadian Agency (CA) and submissions should go to their office directly. After an initial assessment, if the Agency feels that the case is compelling, they will then pass all the documentation to the Commemorations Team at the Commission's Head Office. Head Office will then review the case and inform the CA of their findings. The Canadian authorities will then decide whether or not any changes to the arrangements for commemoration are required and inform the Commission accordingly.	Cases need to present clear and convincing evidence to prove the identity of a casualty and must not be based on assumption or speculation. The Commission's Commemoration Team will also consider whether the findings of a better informed contemporary investigation are being revisited and if there is any new evidence to consider. By way of example, it is unlikely that the Commission would support a revision of the arrangements for the commemoration where it is apparent that no new evidence is being presented and, a better informed previous decision is being revisited some 100 years later.

The following have participated in the preparation, review and submission of this report on a voluntary basis. Those noted below have read the investigative report and compared it to the criteria set out by the CWGC, as a guiding principle, and have agreed to have their name included as part of the review team. The CWGC may contact any of the reviewers at the e-mail address provided below.

Name	Affiliation	E-mail	Contribution
Richard Laughton	Private Researcher LMC Great War Research Company	rlaughton@laughton.ca	Investigator Report Author
Timothy McTague	Private Researcher Rhode Island USA	timmct@verizon.net	Report Reviewer